

**STUDY OF NATIVE AMERICANS  
LIVING IN URBAN AREAS**

## **NATIVE AMERICANS LIVING IN URBAN AREAS TELEPHONE / ON-SITE INTERVIEW GUIDE**

*[The first sets of questions will be asked of most respondents (ICC staff, staff from another organization, local AIAN leaders, PHA staff). The last three sections are questions for specific respondents]*

### **Introduction/Purpose of the Study**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview today.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a researcher from the Urban Institute, a non-profit research organization located in Washington, DC. With me today is [name and affiliation]. I'm here today because the Urban Institute, on behalf of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is studying the housing conditions and needs of Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians across the United States. The study will describe housing needs and socioeconomic conditions in Indian Country.

One part of this study focuses on the housing needs and conditions among Indians living in urban and suburban areas off of reservations and tribal lands. We will be speaking with a number community leaders, staff of organizations that work with Native Americans, and community residents to better understand the housing issues in the study sites. We are visiting 5 communities and talking by telephone to community leaders and local housing organization staff in 25 additional communities.

We will use what we learn today and from other interviews to contribute to a report on housing conditions and needs among Native Americans. This report will be submitted to HUD to inform the federal government of housing challenges. The interview today should last about half an hour [telephone] // one and one half hours [in-person].

I'll start by going over the consent to participate.

### **Confidentiality Statement** *[Interviewer must read this]:* .

Before beginning the interview, I (we) want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and remind you that your participation is voluntary. I (we) know that you are busy and will try to be as brief as possible. We have many questions and are going to talk to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. The interview today should last about an hour. This interview is not part of an audit or a compliance review. We are interested in learning about your ideas, experiences, and opinions about housing in your tribal area/village. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think.

In addition, before we start, I want to let you know that although we will take notes during these interviews, information is never repeated with the name of the respondent in any reports or in any discussions with supervisors, colleagues, or HUD. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all the people we speak with is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

#### **A. Respondent Background Questions**

1. Name and Title of Respondent
2. Affiliation
3. How long have you been in this position?
4. How long have you worked for this organization / agency?
5. Please describe the housing related services or assistance offered by your organization/agency.
6. What is the geographic area your organization or agency serves?
7. Approximately how many people does your organization or agency serve in the course of a year?
8. Please describe your client base. Who seeks services or assistance (race, ethnicity, age, income level, household structure, etc.)?
9. Approximately what percent of your client base is Native American or Alaska Native?
  - a. With which tribes are these clients enrolled or affiliated?
10. Is this organization / agency itself affiliated with a particular tribe or tribes? Which one(s)?
11. And yourself, are you enrolled in a tribe?

[If YES] which one?

[If NO], are you of Native American descent?

#### **B. Housing conditions of AIAN in urban areas**

1. How would you describe the housing conditions experienced by most Native American households in [community]?
  - a. What are the most commonly cited problems?

- b. How widespread do you think these problems are?
2. Are there problems that affect renters more than homeowners? Vice versa?
  - a. What are they?
3. How have housing conditions changed in the past 5 years? Explain
4. Do you think there are differences between the housing conditions faced by Native American (American Indian and Alaska Native) and non-Native households in the community?
  - a. What are the differences?
  - b. What do you think the differences can be attributed to?

### **C. Housing availability, cost, household needs; impact of the recession**

1. What are the most pressing housing needs among Native American households in your community?
2. Is a sufficient supply of safe and affordable housing in your community?
  - a. Does the supply of safe and affordable housing units vary by housing type (small, medium or large rental units, houses for rent, houses for sale, etc.)?
3. Has the supply of safe and affordable housing changed in the last 5 years?
  - a. In what way?
  - b. Do you think the recession has had an impact on housing availability in this area? Explain
4. Has the cost of housing changed in this area?  
 [If YES] How has it changed? Why has it changed? (increased/decreased due to demand for rental units; increased/decreased sales prices due demand / foreclosures and drop in demand; etc.)

### **D. Homelessness (changes in who is homeless, available resources)**

1. Is *homelessness* or being at risk of homelessness (e.g., having no residence, staying in a shelter or transitional housing, staying with friends or family on a non-permanent basis) a problem among Native Americans living in [community]?
2. What are the major factors leading to homelessness among Native Americans here?
  - a. Probe: lack of affordable housing; loss of income; domestic violence, mental or physical health problems, substance abuse, etc.

3. What would you estimate the number of homeless Native Americans in this community to be?
  - a. Has there been a change in the last 5 years in the number of homeless people?
4. Do most homeless Native Americans here have no place to stay, stay in temporary housing, or double up with family or friends?
5. Is overcrowding a problem in homes where people double up?
6. Has there been a change in the last 5 years in who becomes homeless (age, gender, tribal group, family structure, education level, etc.)?

[If YES] Please describe the change.

7. Are there organizations or agencies that target homeless-related services to the Native American community? Describe.
8. Do many Native Americans make use of homeless shelters?

[If NO] Why do you think they do not?

9. What is needed here in the way of services, outreach, or other factors to address problems of homelessness among Native Americans in [community]?

#### **E. Capacity (availability and quality) of local organizations to address housing needs**

1. To what degree is your organization / agency able to meet your clients' housing needs?
  - a. What housing needs are beyond what your organization / agency can address?
  - b. What are the barriers to your organization's / agency's ability to address these needs? (funds, training, additional staff, space, etc.)
2. What other organizations / agencies in the area meet the housing needs of Native Americans?
  - a. Do any of these organizations / agencies provide services or solutions that your organization/agency is unable to provide? *[If Yes]* Please describe.
3. Are there organizations / agencies in the area that have expertise in addressing the housing needs of Native Americans who:
  - a. Are elderly? Are single parents? Who have young children?
  - b. Are victims of domestic violence?
  - c. Have a disability? Have a substance abuse problem?
  - d. Have a felony conviction?

- e. Are veterans?
- 4. What would you say are the most effective programs in your community that address housing needs among Native American households?
  - a. What makes these programs successful? In what way are they successful?
- 5. Do organizations and agencies that address the housing needs of Native American households ever work together, either formally or informally?
  - a. Examples?
- 6. [*If not already mentioned*] Are there Native American-run organizations that have some focus on housing?
- 7. Do the organizations that address the housing needs of Native Americans tend to work with people regardless of tribal enrollment and descent or do they target services to people from a specific tribe or tribes?
- 8. If you could, what new housing program would you start in your community to address Native American housing needs? Why?
- 9. How would you change existing programs if you could?
- 10. What factors affect Native Americans' willingness to seek assistance or support for housing needs from community organizations or agencies?
  - a. What factors tend to encourage Native American households to seek assistance?
  - b. What factors discourage households?

## **F. PHA staff module**

- 1. What percentage of your public housing clients are Native Americans?
  - a. For Housing Choice Vouchers?
  - b. For Section 184 loan guarantees?
  - c. For other types of assistance?
- 2. Has the percent changed in the last 5 years? Describe the change.
  - a. What factors do you think have led to the change?
- 3. Have you seen a change in the number of Native American households applying for assistance (regardless of whether they receive assistance)?

[If YES] Why do you think there has been a change? (Recession-related factors, job loss, increase in housing costs, lack of affordable housing units for people moving to the community, etc.)

4. Have you seen changes in the characteristics of Native American households who have applied for assistance in the past 5 years? (age, marital status, number of children, tribal status)
5. Does your agency conduct outreach to Native Americans?

[If YES] Please describe

6. Does your agency have information materials targeted to Native Americans?

[If YES] May I have a copy?

7. Are there particular challenges related to serving Native Americans? Please explain.

#### **G. Local AIAN community leaders module (also include in ICC guide)**

1. Describe the ways that your organization works with agencies that address housing needs of Native Americans / Alaska Natives.
2. What are some of the key issues that bring you in contact with such organizations?
3. Do you find some organizations or agencies better able to work with Native Americans to address their housing needs?
  - a. What factors make an organization or agency more effective than others?
4. Nowadays, what are some of the main reasons Native Americans might choose to move from tribal lands to urban areas? (job opportunities, access to housing, education opportunities, domestic violence, etc.)
5. What factors lead Native Americans to move from urban areas to reservations / tribal areas? (access to housing, reasons related to family, reasons related to culture, etc.)
6. Has the recession been a factor in people's decisions more recently?
  - a. How has it affected people's decisions on where to live? Examples?
7. Do more people move between tribal lands and urban areas now than 5 years ago?
  - a. Why has the number of people increased/decreased?
8. Has the number of moves people make between tribal lands and urban areas increased in the last 5 years?
  - a. Why do you think people are moving more/less often than in the past?

9. Do you find that many or few Native Americans living in [community] maintain close ties with their tribes?
  - a. Do people visit family or friends on-the-res? Attend cultural events? Attend tribal meetings? Use tribal services?
  - b. Why do you think most Native Americans living in urban areas do/do not maintain close ties with a reservation or tribal area?

## **H. HUD HQ and regional staff module<sup>1</sup>**

*The bracketed phrases are topics we said we would explore with HUD HQ and regional staff as part of the urban studies component. We need more guidance on these questions.*

### *[Provision of federal housing programs to urban AIAN]*

1. Do any federal housing programs explicitly include Native American households in the list of potential clients?
2. Are there any federal programs that identify Native American households, other than people living on Indian lands, as priority clients?

### *[Outreach to AIAN households]*

3. Does HUD provide guidance to local HAs on how to reach out to Native American households living in metro areas? Please explain.
4. Are there outreach materials local HAs can use that have been developed specifically with Native American households in mind?
  - a. If so, may I have a copy?

### *[Challenges to serving AIAN households]*

5. What challenges do local HAs identify as associated with serving Native Americans households in metro areas?
6. How has HUD responded to any request from local HAs for assistance working with Native American households? Examples?

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<sup>1</sup> We will seek answers to these questions as part of the process of finalizing data collection instruments, and only include this module if questions remain



## COMMUNITY GROUP IN URBAN AREAS DISCUSSION GUIDE

*[Discussion group participants will be recruited with the assistance of ICC staff. Participants will be at least 18 years of age. Ideally, participants will be diverse in housing tenure (renters, owners, homeless), age, tribal membership or affiliation, and time in the community. ICC staff will be asked to recruit 15 adult heads-of-households to ensure 10 to 12 actual participants per group. One discussion group will be held in each of the 5 case study sites].*

### Introduction and Consent

Thank you for coming and agreeing to participate in this group discussion today.

- **Who are we?** I'm [name], a researcher with the Urban Institute; I will be your moderator for the session. The Urban Institute is a non-profit research organization located in Washington, DC. With me today is [name and affiliation].
- **Why am I here?** You have been invited to join this group because you are Native American and because you live in [name of community]. The Urban Institute asked [local organization] to invite people to participate in this group. The Institute, on behalf of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is studying the housing conditions and needs of Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians across the United States. One part of this study focuses on the housing needs and conditions among Indians living in urban and suburban areas off of reservations and tribal lands. We will be speaking with community leaders, staff of organizations that work with Native Americans, and you to better understand the housing issues in the study sites. We are visiting 5 communities and talking by telephone to community leaders and local housing organization staff in 25 additional communities.
- **What is a discussion group?** Discussion groups are a way to find out what people think about an issue through group discussion. We are interested in learning about your ideas, feelings, and opinions about housing in [community]. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think. You should feel free to disagree with each other; we hope to hear as many points of view as possible in response to the questions I'll ask. Your participation is very important to the success of this study.
- **What happens with the information shared during the group?** We will use what we learn today and from other interviews and discussion groups to contribute to a report on housing conditions and needs among Native Americans. This report will be submitted to HUD to inform the federal government of housing challenges.

- **How does this work?** The session today should last about two hours. At the end of this session, we will ask you to complete a short, anonymous background information form. We will also give you \$20 for participating today and will ask you to sign a receipt indicating you have received this payment.
- I may remind you occasionally to speak one at a time so that we can hear your comments. I am your guide, but this is a group discussion; everyone should feel free to speak. To keep us on schedule, I may change the subject or move ahead. Please stop me if you have something to add.

Are there any questions before we begin? We'll start by going over the consent to participate.

**Confidentiality Statement** *[Interviewer must read this]:*

Participation in this discussion group is voluntary, which means that you don't have to participate and you can decide not to answer any specific questions. There are no consequences for choosing not to participate or not to answer any question. You can also leave the group at any point. You will receive a [CASH GIFT/ GIFT CARD/VOUCHER] as a token of appreciation for participating. The group discussion will last about two hours.

The information you provide will be confidential, and will not be shared with anyone except for research staff working on the study. This includes anything that can identify you such as your name, address, or telephone number. Information is never repeated with the name of a participant in any reports or in any discussions with program staff or HUD. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all the people we speak with is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified. Everyone who works on this survey has signed a legal document stating they will not reveal any of your personal information and can be severely penalized if they do.

We value the information you will share with us today and want to make sure we capture all of it. So, with your permission, we will be taping the session and/or [name of person] will be taking notes on a laptop computer. However, we destroy the tapes as soon as we have made complete notes of the meeting, and those notes will not use your names. Does anyone have an objection to taping this group? Also, as we said, we will not use your names in preparing any reports and will disguise your comments so that no one can identify who made specific comments. We will ask you to sign for your incentive payment in order to account for our financial disbursements, but we pass on only a coded identifier, not your name, to our accounting department.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

## DISCUSSION GROUP TOPICS

Please tell us your first name, the tribe you are enrolled in or descended from, and whether you live here in [community] or in a nearby area.

I'd like to begin with a very broad question that will help guide the rest of our discussion today.

### A. Housing Challenges - Open

1. What are the major issues related to housing you have experienced or have heard about from other Native American and Alaska Native community members?

Probe if necessary: cost, availability, quality / conditions, location, access, etc.

*[MODERATOR: 1) Select topic modules based on issues mentioned by discussants 2) After covering these topics, proceed to the remaining modules, if any.]*

### B. Housing Availability and Cost

1. Are there many apartments or houses available to rent or purchase in [community]?
  - a. Is housing availability a problem here?
2. Do you think the number of available housing units has changed in the last five years or so?
  - a. How has availability changed? (more/less housing available; changes in the availability of decent housing; housing from foreclosures)
3. Do you think the cost of housing is a problem in [community]? Explain
4. Have rents or sales prices changed in the last five or so years?

[If YES] How have prices changed? (increased, decreased) Why do you think prices have changed?

### C. Access to Rental Housing (information and cost)

1. Where do people find information on houses and apartments available for rent? (websites, newspaper, friends or family, rental signs in neighborhoods, ICC, other community organization or agency, etc.)
2. If you have looked for apartments or houses for rent in the last few years, how did you go about finding information on available apartments and houses?
3. Do you think the information on available houses/apartments for rent is easy to find? Is there enough information on available units?
4. What would make it easier for people to find out about available houses/apartments for rent?

5. Are there affordable houses or apartments to rent that are decent?

#### **D. Access to For-sale Housing (information and cost)**

1. Where do people interested in buying a home/condominium find out about properties for sale? (websites, newspaper, friends or family, for-sale signs in neighborhoods, real estate agents, ICC, other community organization or agency, etc.)
2. Where do people interested in buying a home/condominium go to learn about home loan options? (banks, Native-owned credit union or community development financial institutions, etc.)
3. Are there particular barriers or challenges that affect people's decision or ability to buy a house/condominium? (difficulty in qualifying for a mortgage, limited access to banks/lenders, etc.)
4. Have you heard about any homebuyer classes that prepare people to become homeowners? Describe.

#### **E. Homelessness – who is homeless, available resources**

1. Is *homelessness* or risk of homelessness (e.g., having no residence, staying in a shelter or transitional housing, staying with friends or family on a non-permanent basis) a problem among Native Americans/Alaska Natives living in this community?
  - a. Would you say there are more people now than there were 5 years ago who have no place to stay, stay in temporary housing, or double up with family or friends?
2. Can you describe who the homeless people are in this community in terms of tribal group, age group, gender, singles / families, other characteristics – employment status, health status, etc.?
3. What do you think are the major challenges or barriers to finding decent housing for the people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless?
4. Do you know of any housing services or resources available to people who are at risk of becoming homeless or who are homeless? Describe.
  - a. Are these resources sufficient?
  - b. Are they helpful based on what you may have heard in the community? Explain

#### **F. Access to Housing Services / organizations that can address housing needs**

1. Are there any services or resources available in this area for people in need of some type of housing assistance, such as assistance in finding a place to live, assistance with paying rent, arranging housing repairs, etc.? Describe
2. How difficult is it to access the services and resources you mentioned? Describe.

[If NO] What makes them difficult to access? (location, cultural barriers, criteria for receiving services, etc.)

3. *[If there are tribe-specific organizations]* Do members of [name] community tend to go to an organization only if it is affiliated with their own tribal group? Why?
4. What would help improve access to housing services available in this area?
5. To what degree are the available services able to address people's housing needs? Explain.

Now I'd like to ask some questions about where people choose to live.

### **G. Living in Urban Areas and on Indian Land**

1. Why do you think some people leave [community] to move to a reservation or tribal land?
  - a. And why do you think some people leave more urban areas to move to areas next to a reservation or tribal land but not on it?
2. What about people who have grown up in an urban community or have moved to urban areas in recent memory (well past the time of forced relocation). Why do you think people stay instead of moving to a reservation or tribal land?
3. To what degree does availability of housing or housing costs in this area affect people's decisions on where to live?
4. What about you, do you intend to stay here or in another urban area or do you think you might move someday to a reservation or to tribal land? Why?
5. For those of you who intend to stay, what might change your mind and lead you to leave [community]?
6. For those of you who intend to leave, what might change your mind?
7. What are your hopes for your children or grandchildren in this regard? Would you want them to live here or in another urban area or do you hope they will live on a reservation or tribal land? Why?

### **H. Wrap up**

1. Are there other issues related to housing issues or concerns that I haven't asked about?

Thank you

*Ask participants to complete the background questionnaire and sign a stipend receipt form.*

**DISCUSSION GROUP  
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM**

*Please complete this form. The information will be used only to summarize who participated in this discussion group. Your name and address are not needed.*

1. How many years have you lived in this community? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Have you ever lived on a reservation or tribal land? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the total number of people living in your household? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many children younger than 18 live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. What tribe are you enrolled in? \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. If not enrolled, are you a descendent or otherwise affiliated with a tribe?  
9. \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, which tribe? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Are you employed?  
☐ Yes  
    o Full time (more than 32 hours per week)  
    o Part time  
☐ No
8. Are you a student?  
☐ Yes  
    o Full time  
    o Part time  
☐ No
9. Which category best describes your total household income for 2010? Please include income from all jobs, public assistance, or social security by anyone in the household, before taxes. (check one)  
☐ Less than \$10,000  
☐ \$10,000 to \$19,999  
☐ \$20,000 to \$39,999  
☐ \$40,000 to \$59,999  
☐ \$60,000 to \$79,999  
☐ \$80,000 to \$99,999  
☐ \$100,000 or more

10. Are you:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

11. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is your housing situation?

- ☐ Homeowner
- ☐ Renter, unassisted
- ☐ Renter in public housing
- ☐ Renter with a Housing Choice (Section 8) Voucher
- ☐ Stay with family or friends
- ☐ Stay at a shelter or other temporary housing
- ☐ Currently have no place to stay
- ☐ Other\_\_\_\_\_